

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

SECURITY STRATEGY FOR POSTWAR IRAQ

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## ABSTRACT

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This paper examines shortcomings in the development and execution of the postwar security strategy for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The strategy is evaluated from the perspective of the diplomatic, informational, military and economic elements of national power. The paper presents lessons learned from the postwar strategy as they relate to recommendations made before the war by the bipartisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction. It also includes other lessons learned and corrective actions the Commission didn't address.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
SECURITY STRATEGY FOR POSTWAR IRAQ .....	1
<b>POSTWAR PLANNING</b> .....	1
<b>STRATEGY EXECUTION</b> .....	5
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS OF BIPARTISAN COMMISSION ON POST-CONFLICT     RECONSTRUCTION</b> .....	9
<b>OTHER LESSONS LEARNED</b> .....	12
ENDNOTES .....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	19



## SECURITY STRATEGY FOR POSTWAR IRAQ

The U.S. didn't follow basic tenets of strategy development in developing the postwar security strategy for Iraq. The strategy lacked unity of effort among the diplomatic, military, economic and informational elements of national power. U.S. officials made incorrect assumptions, which affected the ways and means to achieve the objective. Further, consensus wasn't reached on the resources required to implement the strategy, thereby threatening loss of political and popular support for the war. Thus, the U.S. found itself in a position of reacting to conditions in postwar Iraq rather than in a leading position of shaping conditions to achieve the political or strategic objective.

The primary lesson learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom is that the U.S. needs to put more focus on postwar security strategy and be better prepared for the complex tasks of security and nation building, particularly in wars involving regime change. Among the key actions needed are defined interagency roles and responsibilities, a standing force of reconstruction experts and peacekeepers, and improved checks and balances in the Federal government. Congress proposed legislation during 2003 to deal with these issues, which if implemented will have a positive impact on how the U.S. plans, develops and executes postwar strategy.

### POSTWAR PLANNING

On 16 March 2003, President Bush presented to the Atlantic Summit his vision or political objective for Iraq. This vision called for a unified Iraq and the establishment of a representative government that upholds human rights and the rule of law as cornerstones of democracy.<sup>1</sup> President Bush cited a need to protect Iraq's national resources, enhance the economy and prevent it from becoming a haven for terrorists. He also said "Any military presence, should it be necessary, will be temporary and intended to promote security and elimination of weapons of mass destruction; the delivery of humanitarian aid; and the conditions for the reconstruction of Iraq." The President's statement laid the foundation for a postwar military presence and security strategy for Iraq.

William Flavin states "Planning for termination and postwar operations should begin as early as possible. It must be an interagency, multinational, integrated effort. In planning for termination and post-conflict peace operations, the first and primary objective is to establish an achievable end state based on clear objectives".<sup>2</sup> Flavin further states:

The next most important element is achieving unity of effort among the diplomatic, military, economic and informational aspects of national power. National unity must be harmonized with multinational partners and the community of international organizations and non-governmental organizations. Planners must visualize the situation from the start of the war through termination and into post-conflict peace operations to ensure all of the parts are synchronized. With the concept harmonized, it is then necessary to consider resources. Conflict resolution may not be possible if adequate resources are not available.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, U.S. postwar planning didn't adhere to this process. Strategy development wasn't an integrated effort, particularly within the interagency process. Initially, the Department of State had lead responsibility for post-conflict planning and reconstruction. For about eight months, the Department of State developed a detailed plan and assembled a team to administer the reconstruction of Iraq.<sup>4</sup> The plan and its final report consisted of thirteen volumes on specific topics plus a one-volume summary and overview.<sup>5</sup> During January 2003 (less than two months from the start of the war) President Bush shifted responsibility for postwar occupation and reconstruction from the Department of State to DoD. Within DoD, retired LTG Jay M. Garner was tasked to develop the postwar plan and the staff assigned consisted of a small number of Pentagon planners. This group excluded officials from the Department of State and even some from the Pentagon, including officers of the Joint Staff.<sup>6</sup> The shift in responsibility discarded months of planning work by Department of State officials and created a rift in interagency cooperation. In effect, this action deharmonized the unity of effort in the postwar planning process.

The interagency process also couldn't come to agreement about whether and how quickly Iraq could become a full-fledged democracy. DoD civilian officials believed in a smooth and quick transition to democracy in Iraq, while the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency believed democracy would be difficult to achieve and viewed the prospects as bleak.<sup>7</sup> Thus, there was doubt whether the U.S. could achieve the President's end state for Iraq.

In planning for conflict termination, Central Command planners conducted war-gaming exercises and started preparing plans for postwar Iraq. However, the postwar plan didn't come to fruition partly because it called for a larger military force than what Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was willing to deploy.<sup>8</sup> Thus, Corps Headquarters and subordinate units didn't have a plan to execute after the fall of Baghdad with clear objectives such as restoring and maintaining public order and public life---a requirement for an occupying force stipulated by the 1907 Hague Convention.<sup>9</sup> As a result, military units stood by after the fall of Baghdad as Iraqis looted and

committed violence, thereby increasing the cost and burden of reconstruction.<sup>10</sup> Also, objectives and plans weren't in place for transferring internal security responsibilities to Iraqis.

Unity of effort wasn't achieved among the diplomatic, military, economic and informational elements of national power. Diplomatically, the U.S. didn't obtain United Nations backing for the war and in the process alienated key allies such as Germany and France. The lack of United Nations support proved problematic because nations wouldn't commit troops and resources to assist in maintaining security and rebuilding the country. This put a strain on U.S. military and economic elements of power. Further, U.S. justification to launch a preemptive war based on alleged Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and terrorist links were unfounded and damaging to U.S. credibility and foreign policy.

Militarily, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and General Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff disagreed over the potential number of troops required for peacekeeping operations. General Shinseki believed upwards of several hundred thousand troops might be needed to provide stability in postwar Iraq. On 27 February 2003, Paul Wolfowitz testified to the House Budget Committee and said "It's hard to conceive that it would take more forces to provide stability in post-Saddam Iraq than it would take to conduct the war itself and to secure the surrender of Saddam's security forces and his Army".<sup>11</sup> Senior DoD officials also ignored intelligence agencies warnings of significant hostility to a US-led occupation. The end result was that the Coalition didn't have sufficient troops to secure the country.

From an economic perspective, DoD conducted minimum postwar planning. LTG Jay M. Garner's reconstruction staff developed plans to house and feed Iraqi refugees, repair oil infrastructure and repair electrical generation facilities. But the staff didn't have the expertise to develop a comprehensive economic revitalization plan and it was too small to administer the massive reconstruction effort. This problem persisted 9-months following the war when Ambassador Bremer requested 1,000 additional personnel for the Coalition Provisional Authority.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding the information element of national power, the U.S. was largely ineffective. During May 2003, a Pew Global Attitudes Project conducted a survey of 16,000 people in 20 countries and the Palestinian territories. The survey showed the percentage of those who have a favorable view of the U.S. declined sharply (15 percentage points or more) in nations including Brazil, France, Germany, Jordan, Nigeria, Russia, and Turkey".<sup>13</sup> Also an overwhelming majority of Arabs perceived the Iraq war as an imperial reach by the U.S. into their world, a favor to Israel, or a way for the U.S. to secure control over Iraq's oil.<sup>14</sup> The inability of the U.S.

to build global popular support made it politically difficult for countries to pledge military and financial assistance for Iraq.

Postwar planning didn't adequately address the resources required to achieve the end state or political objective. DoD civilian officials believed in a smooth and quick transition to Democracy and assumed the U.S. had sufficient military forces to achieve the objective in Iraq and meet other national security requirements. However, the Congressional Budget Office issued a report on 2 September 2003 stating that the military was at the "breaking point" in its troop deployments, particularly in regard to Iraq.<sup>15</sup> The report stated that the 180,000-member occupation force (including Kuwait) could not be maintained much beyond March 2004, after which active Army units would have to be decreased. The report further stated that assuming use of all available forces, the Pentagon could maintain a long-term occupation force of only 106,000 military personnel. To deal with the situation, DoD and the Coalition Provisional Authority announced plans to train Iraqis to provide for their own security--an action that should have started months earlier after the fall of Baghdad.

Administration officials were unable to provide credible estimates of the funds needed for reconstruction. White House Budget Director, Mitchell E. Daniels Jr. initially testified to Congress that the war would cost \$50 to \$60 billion.<sup>16</sup> However, on 8 September 2003, President Bush requested Congress for \$87 billion in FY 2004 for reconstruction. This was in addition to the \$79 billion Congress previously approved.<sup>17</sup> Estimates of future costs ranged from about \$145 billion to \$170 billion during FYs 2005-2009. The total cost of the war might amount to \$336 billion, which is five times greater than initially estimated. If Congress was initially presented with a realistic estimate, it might have urged the President to take a different course of action regarding Iraq.

The cost of reconstruction undermined support for the war effort. A Gallup Poll taken 19-21 September 2003 showed 50 percent of Americans believing the situation in Iraq was worth going to war versus a high of 76 percent in April.<sup>18</sup> Members of Congress from both parties expressed alarm at the growing costs of the war effort. The erosion of governmental and public support threatened to create an imbalance between the government, military and people. Without a harmonious balance among these three elements wars cannot be won no matter how just the cause or how great the effort invested.<sup>19</sup>

Lastly, errors made in assumptions and risks affected how DoD civilian officials visualized the situation from the start of the war through termination and into post-conflict peace operations. They assumed Iraqis would welcome Coalition forces as liberators and maintained an overly optimistic outlook regarding security and other issues in the aftermath of the war.<sup>20</sup>

These assumptions were dubious, given the fact that intelligence agencies warned before the war of significant hostility to an U.S.-led occupation.<sup>21</sup> In particular, they warned of Iraqi plans to carry on resistance efforts after the war.<sup>22</sup> The optimistic assumptions by DoD civilian officials undermined efforts to develop a sound postwar strategy. Hence, the U.S. was not adequately prepared to deal with the situation in postwar Iraq.

## **STRATEGY EXECUTION**

Deficiencies in strategic planning came to light in how the postwar strategy was executed. LTG Jay Garner's entrance into Baghdad was delayed by twelve days because there were too few soldiers to provide security and logistics.<sup>23</sup> Also, LTG Garner's staff was too small for the task and lacked the computer equipment and communications capability to effectively begin administrative operations. Within a month, LTG Garner was replaced by Ambassador L. Paul Bremer. Thus, valuable time was lost in reconstituting the Iraqi police and governmental services to maintain security and order during the early stage of stability operations when Iraqis were forming their opinion on the new state of affairs.

The biggest mistake made following the war was disbanding the 400,000 man Iraqi Army. Against the advice of LTG Garner, Ambassador Paul Bremer on 15 May 2003, disbanded the Army as part of efforts to purge Baath Party influence from Iraqi society.<sup>24</sup> This action exacerbated unemployment and created an instant source of recruits for the insurgency. During August 2003, DoD officials and the Coalition Provisional Authority reversed themselves and set about an accelerated effort to reestablish Iraqi security forces (including the Army). By disbanding the Army, the U.S. lost an opportunity to influence and build trust with former Iraqi military leaders and soldiers to support Coalition reconstruction efforts. If the Iraqi Army wasn't disbanded, the U.S. might have reduced its troop strength sooner in Iraq and achieved a greater degree of security.

As predicted by U.S. intelligence agencies, an insurgency or guerilla war emerged in Iraq. From 1 May 2003 through November 2003, attacks against Coalition forces grew from a few to as high as 40 each day.<sup>25</sup> Attacks also were directed at Iraqi leaders, police stations and those cooperating with the Coalition. In addition, the UN headquarters in Baghdad was bombed on 19 August and 22 September 2003. These bombings killed 28 people including the head of the UN mission in Iraq. The immediate effect of the bombings was a general retrenchment of foreign staff. The UN sent away more than a third of its staff, while the World Bank and International Monetary Fund evacuated their staff.<sup>26</sup> Because of security concerns, the UN and non-

governmental organizations were reluctant to maintain a presence in Iraq and provide reconstruction and humanitarian assistance.<sup>27</sup>

To counter the insurgency, Coalition military forces stepped up patrols and conducted intrusive searches and raids in Iraqi communities. These actions angered the population and made it difficult for community leaders to cooperate with Coalition forces.<sup>28</sup> Also, attacks conducted by the insurgents and the Coalition response resulted in an increasing loss of innocent lives. Thus, Iraqis increasingly viewed the occupation force more as a threat to their security rather than as their protector. Consequently, Iraqi intolerance to the military occupation grew. US officials incorrectly assumed Iraqis would tolerate Coalition forces so long as they were provided basic services and evidence of economic and political progress.<sup>29</sup> A poll conducted during the period 28 September to 10 October 2003 found that 60 percent of Iraqis opposed or strongly opposed the presence of Coalition forces in Iraq.<sup>30</sup> Also, the percentage of Iraqis who view Coalition forces as occupiers, not liberators, increased from 46 percent to 67 percent during the previous six months.

The insurgents aimed to build support by exploiting the discontent that existed between the Iraqis and the Coalition.<sup>31</sup> This discontent was the military occupation and high unemployment. Ahmad Chalabi, President of Iraq's interim government, said the military occupation fuels the insurgency and the terror attacks<sup>32</sup>. The attacks slowed economic recovery, which kept unemployment high and spawned criminal activity. Breaking the chain of insurgent support called for ending the occupation and achieving economic progress. On 15 November 2003, President Bush announced that sovereignty would be restored to Iraq by 1 July 2004, thereby officially ending the occupation.

Economic progress and improved living conditions are key to "winning the hearts and minds" of the Iraqi people. During the first few months of the military occupation, the Coalition was successful in reopening schools, hospitals and markets. Iraq also issued new currency and implemented banking reforms and laws to spur foreign investment.

Military commanders in the North and South of Iraq had success in building goodwill with local leaders by funding small-scale projects in communities with funds seized from Saddam Hussein's regime. Commanders received authority to spend about \$170 million. With so much of Iraq in poor condition, commanders found that the funds were warmly received in the Iraqi communities. In some cases, commanders let the U.S.-created neighborhood councils set spending priorities in an effort to promote democracy and self-sufficiency. However, the funds were expended by August and commanders had no additional funds to spend for several months. Meanwhile, Iraqi contractors weren't getting paid and momentum was lost in winning

public support. COL Joseph Anderson, commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division summed up the situation stating "money is our ammo". "We had many plans based on good faith, and people expect results. We are now having to explain why we can't follow through."<sup>33</sup>

Iraq faced significant economic challenges. After eight months of stability operations, electricity generation was running about 78 percent of pre-war output and water pumping was at 65 percent of pre-war levels.<sup>34</sup> Oil production and export fell short of goals primarily because of recurring sabotage in the northern oil fields. More troublesome, was the inability of the Coalition Provisional Authority to begin large-scale public works projects to ease unemployment and provide a visible improvement in living conditions.

Nationwide unemployment in Iraq was about 60 percent (as of September 2003) and as high as 75 percent in some Sunni communities.<sup>35</sup> Sami al-Thamami, Iraq's director general of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs said the unemployment problem feeds the security crisis, and vice versa". Problems were exacerbated by power shortages, curfews and war damaged factories. Sami al-Thamami further stated "the situation is desperate, the unemployed are ready to take any action, including joining Saddam loyalists to launch attacks against Coalition forces".<sup>36</sup>

The Coalition Provisional Authority wasn't effective in disbursing aid monies. Military leaders criticized the Authority and its designated contractors for taking too long to approve projects.<sup>37</sup> Part of the problem stemmed back to a shortage and turnover of staff employed by the Coalition Provisional Authority.

As of December 2003, nearly \$4 billion of the \$7.2 billion of funds earmarked or spent on reconstruction were monies belonging to Iraq.<sup>38</sup> Iraqis had little say in how their money was spent and the Coalition Provisional Authority provided minimal transparency on their use. Also, the Coalition Provision Authority hadn't disbursed any of the \$18.6 billion of funds Congress as of 29 December 2003. Expenditure of these funds was held up over U.S. negotiations with other countries concerning forgiveness of Iraqi debt and eligibility for reconstruction contracts.<sup>39</sup> The \$18.6 billion was to be used to launch a massive reconstruction program to expand Iraq's electrical, water and sewage systems--projects crucial to easing unemployment and improving living conditions.<sup>40</sup> Concerns were raised over the mismanagement of aid monies. John Hamre, president of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, led a team in Iraq and testified at a House Armed Services Committee that the Bush administration's accounting of funds spent in Iraq was less than satisfactory.<sup>41</sup> Congress expressed concern about \$3 billion of noncompetitive contracts awarded to Bechtel Corporation and Kellogg Brown and Root.<sup>42</sup>

Noncompetitive contracts typically incur higher costs versus contracts awarded through competition.

During a congressional delegation visit to Iraq, MG David Petraeus informed lawmakers that Iraqis were able to get one cement factory operating for \$80,000, even though U.S. engineers estimated the job would cost \$15 million.<sup>43</sup> Part of the reason for the high cost estimate was the use of foreign labor. Most of Iraq's reconstruction needs to be done by Iraqis. Using Iraqi labor is not only less costly, but helps to reduce unemployment and the related criminal activity that is a source of instability.

The Iraqi Governing Council questioned the Coalition Provisional Authority in its spending decisions. The Authority awarded a \$20 million contract to buy new revolvers and Kalashnikov rifles for the Iraqi police when U.S. forces confiscated tens of thousands of weapons monthly from abandoned arsenals.<sup>44</sup> The Iraqi Governing Council also challenged an American decision to spend \$1.2 billion to train 35,000 Iraqi police officers in Jordan, when such training could be done in Iraq for a fraction of the cost. The perceived misuse of aid monies undermined use of economic power to win the peace in Iraq and created the perception that the U.S. wasn't committed to Iraq's economic progress.

The Coalition Provisional Authority also didn't give sufficient attention to stemming corruption. Contracts were awarded to sheiks to buy their loyalty or support even though other contractors submitted bids that were substantially less.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the contracting process wasn't fair and impartial, thereby fostering corruption. Unchecked, corruption weakens governments and deters foreign investment needed to achieve long-term economic prosperity.

Regarding use of informational power, the U.S. had mixed results. A Gallup poll conducted in Baghdad during the period 28 August 2003 to 4 September 2003 showed nearly two-thirds of 1,178 Iraqis surveyed say the removal of Saddam Hussein was worth the hardships they have endured.<sup>46</sup> However, a federal panel investigating American public diplomacy in the Arab world reported at the end of September 2003, that despite U.S. efforts to win hearts and minds, "hostility toward America has reached shocking levels".<sup>47</sup> A poll conducted by Oxford Research International and released on 1 December 2003 showed that nearly 75 percent of Iraqis lacked confidence in the Coalition Provisional Authority. The poll also showed that nearly four out of five Iraqis had little or no confidence in U.S. forces occupying Iraq.<sup>48</sup>

Efforts by the U.S. to counter Arab hostile feelings were counterproductive. Some of the hostility can be attributed to statements made by the President and other high-level officials in the administration. For example, President Bush referred to Prime Minister Sharon of Israel as

a "man of peace". This comment caused outrage among Arabs who view Prime Minister Sharon as the persecutor of Palestinians. Another example involves comments Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld made in early September stating that "making Iraq safe is a job for Iraqis". Yet, President Bush in a speech on 9 October 2003, said Americans "are not the running kind" in reference to critics urging a reduced U.S. commitment in Iraq. This would suggest to Iraqis that the U.S. doesn't intend to turn over security to them and end the occupation. During early September 2003, Vice President Dick Cheney in a televised interview linked Saddam Hussein to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Shortly thereafter, President Bush refuted Cheney's comments. Such statements undermined U.S. credibility with the Iraqi people and the Islamic world.

The biggest challenge on the informational front was maintaining support of the American people for the war. Maintaining popular support depends on signs of success and a reliable exit strategy that could bring peace and democracy to Iraq in a reasonable period of time. Public opinion polls showed a steady decline in American support for the war until the capture of Saddam Hussein. However, continued insurgent attacks on U.S. forces and increasing casualties will likely bring about a further loss of support.

In use of diplomatic power, the U.S. had marginal success. On 23 September 2003, President Bush addressed the United Nations seeking international aid and support for Iraq. After being rebuffed initially, President Bush was able to secure pledges of \$13 to \$19 billion in aid from the international community.<sup>49</sup> The U.S. also was successful in negotiating with countries to forgive the debts owed to them by Iraq. However, the U.S. was unsuccessful in obtaining a United Nations Security Council resolution aimed at obtaining a wider multi-national military force and getting help in forming a new Iraqi government. Diplomatic efforts failed because the U.S. refused to cede control over Iraq's security and reconstruction to the United Nations. The U.S. also differed with the Security Council over the timetable for transferring sovereignty back to the Iraqi people (i.e. preferring to wait until a constitution is adopted and an elected Iraqi government is in place--a situation that could take years). However, on 15 November 2003, the U.S. reversed its position and announced a plan to end the occupation and return sovereignty to the Iraqi people by 1 July 2004.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF BIPARTISAN COMMISSION ON POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION**

During January 2003 (two months prior to the start of the war), the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the U.S. Army issued a report titled "Play to Win" as part of the bipartisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction. The report makes

17 recommendations on how the U.S. can better deal with post-conflict operations.<sup>50</sup> The report's recommendations proved valid, particularly in the aftermath of how the postwar security strategy was developed and executed for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The following paragraphs cite some of the report's recommendations and how they apply to lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Recommendations** Replace the current ad hoc USG strategy and planning process for addressing post-conflict reconstruction situations with a standing comprehensive interagency process.

Establish new Director of Reconstruction posts to lead U.S. post-conflict reconstruction efforts in field.

Refine and standardize the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) guidelines, building on successful experiences with Civil-Military Cooperation Center (CIMIC) operations and in the Joint Forces Command series of experiments. Standardize and institutionalize support for such centers both when U.S. forces run a military operation and when other friendly forces do so.

**Lesson Learned** The interagency process and responsibilities for postwar security strategy weren't well defined and fixed during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Department of State was initially responsible for the postwar security strategy, but this responsibility was reassigned to DoD shortly before the war. The sudden shift in responsibility and the absence of well-defined interagency roles and responsibilities deharmonized the unity of effort among the interagencies. Interagency coordination, particularly between DoD and the State Department was practically non-existent.

To prevent a similar situation from recurring, lead agency responsibility for postwar strategy development, planning and execution should be formally established to include supporting relationships among Federal department and agencies. The Department of State should have lead responsibility for postwar strategic planning and reconstruction, while DoD should have a supporting role in developing and executing the portion of the strategy dealing with security. Provisions should also be made for joint interagency training in postwar strategy development and execution. Responsibilities and supporting relationships need to be included in legislation such that agencies have the authorization to program resources to support assigned responsibilities and functions. During June 2003, Congress introduced legislation that partially addresses these actions under the Act titled "Winning the Peace Act of 2003" (reference Bills S. 1235 and H.R. 2616).<sup>51</sup> As a 31 December 2003, this legislation was still pending.

**Recommendations** Create a robust civilian rapid response capacity modeled on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that could mobilize

U.S. experts from federal, state and local levels as well as from the private and non-profit centers.

The United States government should take the lead in creating and supporting a multi-national Integrated Security Support Component (ISSC), providing units specifically organized, equipped, trained, and manned to execute post-conflict security tasks.

**Lesson Learned** The staff assigned to the Coalition Provisional Authority, particularly during the initial stage of stability operations in Iraq was too small in number and ill equipped to administer the massive reconstruction effort. Thus, reconstruction efforts got off to a slow start creating a security vacuum and missed opportunity for influencing Iraqi opinion when it would have the greatest impact. Having a ready force of reconstruction experts and peacekeepers would provide the capability needed to develop and execute postwar strategy in a coherent and responsive way. Proposed legislation introduced under the "Winning the Peace Act of 2003" will address these actions. Also, a Resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives on 8 January 2003 calling for the establishment of a permanent standing United Nations security force (reference H. Res. 27, United Nations Peacekeepers Resolution of 2003).<sup>52</sup>

**Recommendations** In order to ensure a more holistic and effective response to the problems of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), the United States should designate a lead agency to coordinate and execute DDR efforts.

Expand the U.S. government's legal authority and capacity to train indigenous police forces.

**Lesson Learned** The Commission's report "Play to Win" states "Dealing with Combatants, whether they are organized in formal national security forces, paramilitary units, or private militias, is one of the most pressing and recurring challenges of any post-conflict situation. Failure to respond to this problem adequately and to promote combatants' incorporation into a legitimate security organization, or more frequently a return to civilian life, leads to long-term difficulties across all areas of reconstruction."<sup>53</sup>

Because of the Army's limited force structure, indigenous combatants must be used for security, particularly in nations where regime change is the objective. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Coalition Provisional Authority disbanded the Iraqi Army without any program to integrate soldiers into Iraq's reorganized security force or civilian life. This action created an army of unemployed. The Coalition Provisional Authority should have had a program in place to reorganize and retrain soldiers to protect Iraq's borders, guard infrastructure, quell unrest and perform police duties.

The Commission's report stated "within the U.S. government no single organization or agency owns the problem" in how to deal with defeated combatants. The report recommends the U.S. Agency for International Development having lead responsibility with DoD performing a support role under a signed memorandum of understanding.

DoD's support role should include disarming, reorganizing and retraining of combatants. DoD is best suited for this role based on its own experience in developing military forces and using Special Operations Forces to train indigenous forces. To support this capability, the Army should consider establishing a training brigade in the Reserve force that would have the requisite skill set to perform this function. Also, Army Field Manual 3-07 (Stability Operations and Support Operations) and Joint Publication 3-07.3 (Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peace Operations) needs to place greater emphasis on the disarming, reorganizing and retraining of indigenous combatants in post-conflict operations.

**Recommendation** Develop a coherent strategy and accompany capability to create livelihoods in immediate post-conflict environments.

**Lesson Learned** The Coalition Provisional Authority didn't have a strategy and capability in place for dealing with the massive unemployment followed the war. Decisions to disband the Iraq Army and the Baath Party (primarily Iraq's bureaucracy) had an immediate employment impact on about 10 percent of Iraq's population. Unemployed workers were a source of instability in postwar Iraq and provided a source of recruits for the insurgency. To counter the unemployment, the Coalition Provisional Authority needed the staff and funds to launch major public works initiatives. Congress needs to appropriate funds in advance of the postwar period such that employment initiatives could start when stability operations begin.

#### **OTHER LESSONS LEARNED**

Within the federal government, a major weakness in the strategic planning process was the absence of checks and balances to ensure a sound postwar strategy was in place and executable. Wars involving regime change and rebuilding of a nation require a large commitment of resources. In the case of Iraq, Congress didn't require and DoD didn't present a documented postwar security strategy. Congress might have exposed the flaws in postwar planning and pressured the Bush administration to delay a decision to go to war had it scrutinized the postwar strategy and been aware of the true cost of reconstruction. In this regard, Congress should be the check and balance in the Federal government that ensures the ends, ways and means are in balance before the US gets involved in a major war.

To address this weakness, a Bill (H.R. 3221) was introduced in the House of Representatives on 1 October 2003 to amend the War Powers Resolution to require the President to include post-conflict strategy in the report required under the Resolution.<sup>54</sup> The Bill states "Given the difficulty of post-conflict strategy, developing a clear plan of action at the outset is decisive to success." The plan would articulate U.S. interests and policy objectives for the introduction of Armed Forces into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances. The plan would also define the strategy for achieving policy objectives and responsibilities for implementation. This Bill was pending as of 31 December 2003.

Another lesson learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom deals with the disbursement of aid dollars and transparency of these transactions. Projects of importance to building goodwill in local communities were delayed because the Coalition Provisional Authority and designated contractors were unable to conduct onsite assessments because of security. Until civilian administrators can safely deploy to outlying areas of a country, local commanders should be given the delegated authority to approve and disburse monetary aid. Such authority should include requirements to maintain accountability and control of aid dollars that are appropriate to the conditions commanders face.

The use of aid dollars to positively influence Iraqi leaders wasn't given sufficient attention. Iraqi leaders had little to no say in how aid dollars were used. Instead, the Coalition should have set aside a portion of the aid dollars to be disbursed under the control of Iraqi leaders with the responsibility to provide full transparency. Under this process, the Coalition would stipulate how the aid dollars should be used and conduct follow-up reviews to verify compliance. Those leaders that spent funds on worthwhile endeavors would be rewarded with more aid and those leaders that didn't would get less. Disbursing aid dollars in this manner would develop leaders that support reconstruction goals and have the ability to influence popular support through the ability to provide basic services with aid dollars.

The last lesson learned deals with strategic aspects of informational power. During Operation Iraqi Freedom and its aftermath, the Bush administration made comments that were both contradictory and inflammatory, and had the effect of detracting from the achievement of strategic goals and objective. A well-planned and defined postwar strategy that addresses the strategic aspects of informational power would have helped to minimize such comments.

WORD COUNT=5482



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>2</sup> William Flavin, "Planning for Conflict Termination and Post-Conflict Success", *Parameters* 33 (Autumn 2003): 97

<sup>3</sup> William Flavin, 97

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan S. Landay and Warren P. Stropel, "No real planning for postwar Iraq", *Knight Ridder Newspapers*, 11 July 2003, available at <[http://www.realcities.com/mld/kwashington/news/columnists/joe\\_galloway/6285265.html](http://www.realcities.com/mld/kwashington/news/columnists/joe_galloway/6285265.html)> Internet, accessed 9 October 2003

<sup>5</sup> James Fallows, "Blind Into Baghdad", *Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2004, 52

<sup>6</sup> Peter Slevin and Dana Priest, "Wolfowitz Concedes Errors On Iraq", *The Washington Post*, 24 July 2003, sec A, p. 1

<sup>7</sup> David Reif, "Who Botched the Occupation", *The New York Times Magazine*, 2 Nov 2003, sec. 6, p. 31-32

<sup>8</sup> James Fallows, 11-14

<sup>9</sup> William Flavin, 107

<sup>10</sup> David Reif, 58-59. The 3d Infantry Division's (Mechanized) after action report stated that it didn't receive a Phase IV plan from higher headquarters. The division should have had a "plan to execute" for stability and support operations for at least 30-days. The report says that such an operation should have included "protecting infrastructure, historical sites, administrative buildings, cultural sites, financial institutions, judicial/legal sites and religious sites". Postwar planning deficiencies were also acknowledged in DOD report "Operation Iraqi Freedom: Strategic Lessons Learned".

<sup>11</sup> Peter Slevin and Dana Priest, 1

<sup>12</sup> Warren P. Strobel and Joseph L. Galloway, "Bremer Reportedly Seeks 1,000 More Staffers", *The Philadelphia Inquirer Washington Bureau*, 18 December 2003, p A-12

<sup>13</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, "Bridges, Bombs, or Bust?", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2003, available at <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030901faessay82501/madeleine-k-albright/bridges-bombs>>, Internet, accessed 30 August 2003

<sup>14</sup> Fouad Ajami, "Iraq and the Arabs' Future", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2003, available at <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030101faessay10218/fouad-ajami/iraq-and-the-arabs-future>>, Internet, accessed 30 August 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Cohen, "CBO report shows military at 'breaking point', Byrd says", *Congress Daily*, available from GovExec.com < <http://www.govexec.com/news> >, Internet accessed 4 September 2003

<sup>16</sup> Dana Milbank and Walter Pincus, "Bush Team Stands Firm on Iraq Policy", *The Washington Post*, 15 September 2003, sec A, p. 1

<sup>17</sup> Bruce Nussbaum, "Iraq: Hard Lessons and How to Use Them", *Business Week*, 22 September 2003, 29, 34

<sup>18</sup> Lydia Saad and Frank Newport, "Americans Grow More Doubtful About Iraq War", *Gallup News Service*, 23 September 2003, available at < <http://www.gallup.com/poll/release/pr030923.asp> >, Internet, accessed 23 September 2003

<sup>19</sup> Michael I. Handel, "Strategy: Past Theories, Modern Practice", *Volume III, Course 2: War, National Security Policy and Strategy*, 27 August-24 October 2003, Department of National Security and Strategy, U.S. Army War College, 10

<sup>20</sup> James Fallows, p 2 and p 21. Douglas Feith, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy was quoted "nobody planned for security because Ahmed Chalabi told us everything was going to be swell". Paul Wolfowitz was quoted as stating that he was reasonably certain that Iraqis would greet Coalition forces as liberators, which will help to keep troop requirements down. Peter Slevin and Dana Priest in an article "Wolfowitz Concedes Errors On Iraq", written in the *Washington Post* on 24 July 2003 states that Wolfowitz acknowledged several wrong assumptions. He said in postwar planning, defense officials made three assumptions that "turned out to underestimate the problem", beginning with the belief that removing Saddam Hussein from power would also remove the threat posed by his Baath Party. In addition, they erred in assuming that significant numbers of Iraqi army units, and large numbers of Iraqi police, would quickly join the U.S. military and its civilian partners in rebuilding Iraq. Steven Metz, Director of Research, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College cited several erroneous assumptions Coalition planners made in an article dated September 2003 and titled "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq". These false assumptions include (i) Iraqi security forces would remain intact to provide security, (ii) the infrastructure was in better condition than it was, (iii) Iraqis would be able to quickly govern themselves, (iv) crime and anomie wouldn't be the problem that it turned out to be and (v) Iraqis would tolerate the occupation if they were provided basic services and evidence of economic and political progress.

<sup>21</sup> "US was told to expect Iraqi Resistance", *Aljazeera.Net*, 9 September 2003, available at < <http://english.aljazeera.net/Structural+Postings>; Internet; accessed 19 September 2003

<sup>22</sup> Terrence R. Henry, "Guerilla warfare in Iraq threatens peace, reconstruction", *National Journal*, 6 August 2003, available at < <http://www.govexec.com/news/> > Internet, accessed 4 September 2003

<sup>23</sup> Peter Slevin and Dana Priest, "Wolfowitz Concedes Errors On Iraq", 1

<sup>24</sup> David Reif, 77

<sup>25</sup> Bradley Graham, "November Deadliness Month in Iraq", *The Washington Post*, 29 November 2003, sec A, p. A14

<sup>26</sup> Kevin Whitelaw and Mark Mazzetti, "Troops or Consequences", *U.S. News and World Report*, 1 September 2003, 18

<sup>27</sup> Colum Lynch, "U.N. May Withdraw Personnel from Iraq", *The Washington Post*, 25 September 2003, sec. A, p. A19

<sup>28</sup> Dexter Filkins, "G.I.'s Double Life in Iraq: Win Friends, Fight Foes", *The New York Times*, 2 Nov 2003, sec. A., p. 11

<sup>29</sup> Steven Metz, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq", U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute

<sup>30</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaren, "Civilian Convoy Assault Kills Civilian Contractors", *The Washington Post*, 26 October 2003, sec. A, p. A26. The poll was released by the Iraq Center for Research and Strategic Studies

<sup>31</sup> Patrick E. Tyler and Felicity Barringer, "The Struggle for Iraq: Sovereignty; Iraq Council Head Shifts to Position At Odds With U.S.", *The New York Times*, 23 September 2003, sec. A, p 1

<sup>32</sup> Patrick E. Tyler and Felicity Barringer

<sup>33</sup> Steven Komarrow, "Cash for public works runs dry at bad time for U.S.", *USA TODAY*, 25 November 2003, sec A, p. 10A

<sup>34</sup> Stan Crock, Lee Walczak, Richard S. Dunham, David Fairlamb, Kerry Capell, "Iraq-That's One Problem Solved", *Business Week*, 29 Dec 2003, 40

<sup>35</sup> Mark Fineman, "Open Investment Policy Looks Like 'World Occupation' to Iraq Merchants", *The Los Angeles Times*, 23 September 2003, se. A, p A-1. Fineman cites an estimate of unemployment in Iraq of 60 percent. Unemployment of 75 percent was cited in Sunni communities (Source: Stan Crock, Lee Walczak, Richard S. Dunham, David Fairlamb, Kerry Capell, "Iraq-That's One Problem Solved", *Business Week*, 29 Dec 2003, 40 and 42).

<sup>36</sup> Cesar G. Soriano, "Unemployed Iraqis turn their anger on coalition", *USA TODAY*, 3 October 2003, sec A, p. 8A

<sup>37</sup> Lucian K. Truscott IV, "A Million Miles From the Green Zone to the Front Lines", *The New York Times*, 7 December 2003, sec. A, p. 13

<sup>38</sup> Jackie Spinner and Ariana Eunjung Cha, "U.S. Decisions On Iraq Spending Made in Private", *The Washington Post*, 27 December 2003, sec. A, p. A-1, p. A14, p. A15

<sup>39</sup> Robert D. Novak, "Slowdown In Iraq", *The Washington Post*, 29 December 2003, sec. A, p. A17

<sup>40</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Attacks Force Retreat From Wide-Ranging Plans for Iraq", *The Washington Post*, 28 December 2003, sec. A, p. A1, p. A21

<sup>41</sup> Amy Svitak, "Experts say Iraq reconstruction funds running low", *Congress Daily*, 8 October 2003, available < <http://www.govexec.com/news/index>. > Internet, accessed 9 October 2003

<sup>42</sup> Chris Strohm, "Lawmakers want Iraq contracting process restructured", *GovExec.com*, 8 October 2003, available < <http://www.govexec.com/news/index> > Internet, accessed 9 October 2003

<sup>43</sup> Chris Strohm

<sup>44</sup> Patrick E. Tyler and Raymond Bonner, "Iraqis Say U.S. Occupation Authority Misspends Millions in Its Awarding of Contracts", *The New York Times*, 4 October 2003, sec. A, p. A6

<sup>45</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Officials in Hostile Areas of Iraq Adapt to Tribal Leaders", *The Washington Post*, 23 December 2003, sec. A, p. A16

<sup>46</sup> *The Gallup Organization*, "The Gallup Poll of Baghdad", available at < <http://www.gallup.com> > Internet, accessed 25 September 2003. Also, "Poll shows Baghdad residents optimistic", *Washington Times*: United Press International, 24 September 2003

<sup>47</sup> Michael Holzman, "Washington's Sour Sales Pitch", *The New York Times*, 4 October 2003, sec. A, p. A13

<sup>48</sup> Oxford Research International, "Most Iraqis lack confidence in coalition forces, poll finds", *USA Today*, 2 December 2003, sec. A, p. 9A

<sup>49</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Officials in Hostile Areas of Iraq Adapt to Tribal Leaders", sec. A, p. A16

<sup>50</sup> Association of the United States Army and The Center For Strategic and International Studies, "Play To Win", First Printing January 2003, Executive Summary

<sup>51</sup> Congressional Record, *Winning the Peace Act of 2003*, Bill S. 1235, introduced into the Senate on 11 June 2003 and *Winning the Peace Act of 2003*, Bill H. R. 2616, introduced into the House of Representatives on 26 June 2003, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> sess.

<sup>52</sup> Congressional Record, "Concerning the establishment of a permanent United Nations security force", H. Res. 27, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 8 January, 2003

<sup>53</sup> Association of the United States Army and The Center For Strategic and International Studies, "Play To Win", First Printing January 2003, paragraph titled "Security"

<sup>54</sup> Congressional Record, "To Amend the War Powers Resolution to require the President to include post-conflict strategy in the report required under the Resolution, and for other purposes", Bill H.R. 3221, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1 October 2003

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